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F770002-0054

TELEGRAM

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SUBJECT: Soviet UN Initiative on World Disarmament
Conference

1. Gromyko letter to SYG September 6 requests inclusion of item entitled World Disarmament Conference (WDC) on UNGA agenda as important and urgent item. Letter takes account of arms control agreements achieved and under negotiation, but argues that fundamental progress toward controlling

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9/10/71

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IO - Samuel DePalma

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PM/DCA - Mr. Martin (draft)
IO/UNP - Mr. McIntyre (draft)

EUR/SOV - Mr. Kamman (draft)
EUR/RPM - Mr. McGuire (draft)
EA/ACA - Mr. Brown (draft)

ACDA/IR: - Mr. Fingbaugh
by [signature]

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stockpiling and improvement of armaments has yet to be made. We are pouching full text of letter.

2. Letter reiterates Soviet proposal for conference of five nuclear powers, noting that it most realistic way to success in nuclear arms control, which possible if all five powers willing to work toward agreement. At same time letter states desirability of encouraging efforts of all countries to solve disarmament problems through world conference. All countries of the world would be represented on basis of universality and equality. In reference which it seems obvious to us includes PRC, ^{and} ~~and~~ probably GDR, North Vietnam and North Korea, letter notes special importance of participation of all states which possess significant armed forces and armaments.

3. Letter suggests that whole complex of disarmament ~~xxx~~ problems be considered by conference but that, depending on desire of participants, primary attention could be devoted

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to prohibition of nuclear weapons.

4. Our preliminary reaction is that this Soviet initiative has been taken largely for propaganda and political effect. Among Soviet motives may be desire to avoid being outflanked by PRC world conference proposal and to counter suspicions and charges re US-Soviet collusion in nuclear arms matters. Vague and general nature of Soviet proposal recalls past attempts to use broad schemes such as GCD for propaganda advantage in broad UN forum where simplistic disarmament panaceas can have certain appeal. It is interesting to note that although letter strongly suggests desirability and possibility of WDC, it carefully avoids actually calling for such a conference, asking only for discussion of question.

5. Focus of discussion will, of course, be in New York. We will not resist USSR effort to have its proposed item be included as important and urgent item on GA agenda. Soviet

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proposal will undoubtedly evoke broad interest elsewhere.

In response to queries re our attitude, you might refer to President's speech at UNGA on September 18, 1969. In declaring our readiness to enter SALT talks, he stated then that we were prepared to deal with the complex issues involved seriously, concretely and purposefully and that we would conduct negotiations soberly and seriously seeking to reach agreement rather than to make propaganda. You might also cite Section on Era of Negotiations in President's 1970 Report to Congress which stresses need for realism, concluding with promise that "we shall always be ready to talk seriously and purposefully about the building of a stable peace."

6. You should stress that a realistic approach (which we note USSR specifically recognizes in its letter as most fruitful way of seeking arms control accords) has resulted in a number of solid achievements, including the Limited Test

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Ban Treaty, the Outer Space Treaty, the NPT and the Seabed Arms Control Treaty. Progress has been made on other issues such as BW at CCD in Geneva, and SALT has for the first time tackled fundamental questions of nuclear war in atmosphere devoid of propaganda posturing, and these fora continue to offer most realistic prospect for progress on difficult, complex arms control issues.

7. You may wish to note that we will of course give the Soviet proposal careful study.

Exempt from decontrol.

END

ROGERS

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